

INSPECTION REPORT

**STOKES CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Blaby

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120116

Headteacher: Mr A.S. Crompton

Reporting inspector: Mrs M.E. Cooper
15175

Dates of inspection: 4th to 7th November 2002

Inspection number: 248094

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Queens Road
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs C Reeds

Date of previous inspection: 19th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15175	Margaret Cooper	Registered inspector	English Art and design Educational inclusion English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11096	Margaret Davie	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
6169	Melvyn Bradshaw	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology Music Special educational needs	
27635	Diana Cinamon	Team inspector	Geography History Foundation stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
16971	Roger Hardaker	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a Church of England voluntary controlled primary school located in a suburban village on the outskirts of Leicester. It is larger than average and currently has 336 boys and girls aged from four to eleven on roll, including 21 who currently attend the reception class on a part-time basis. The school draws an increasing number of pupils from beyond the local area. Although there is some variation from year to year, children's attainment when they enter the school is below average, particularly in communication, language and literacy. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (4.8 per cent) is below the national average. The great majority of pupils are of white British heritage. A small minority (4.2 per cent) are from ethnic minorities or mixed ethnic heritage, including pupils from China, India and Bangladesh. The proportion of pupils whose mother tongue is not English (1.2 per cent) is low compared to other schools. Two of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs (15.8 per cent) is broadly average, although the number that have statements of special educational need (2.4 per cent) is higher than that normally seen. Special educational needs include general and specific learning difficulties and physical needs. It is a stable school with a well-established headteacher and staff, and few pupils join or leave the school at times other than the normal times of transfer.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a satisfactory school whose strengths outweigh its weaknesses. It provides a sound quality of education. Pupils make good progress in the reception year and satisfactory progress at the infant and junior stages. This is due to the satisfactory quality of teaching which enables them to attain average standards overall by the age of eleven. Leadership and management are satisfactory, and play a key role in achieving the very good relationships at all levels that are a significant feature of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress in mathematics, music and physical education (PE) and attain above average standards in these subjects by eleven
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, and their relationships with others are very good
- Teaching is good in both the reception year and Year 6. This promotes the consistently good progress pupils make in these year groups.
- The extra-curricular opportunities provided for pupils are excellent
- The school promotes both moral and social development well

What could be improved

- Standards in art and design, design and technology (DT), geography and history
- The quality of teachers' planning
- Opportunities for pupils to work independently and take responsibility for their learning
- Arrangements for monitoring the school's performance
- The school's links with parents

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been sound improvement since the last inspection in January 1998, particularly in the key priorities for development. This is seen, for example, in better provision in both information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education (RE) so that pupils now make sound or better progress in these subjects. There has also been an improvement in teaching, which is now at least satisfactory in each class. Other improvements have been made to assessment procedures, the quality of the school development plan, and implementation of a clear homework policy. Progress in the monitoring role of co-ordinators has been limited. Higher standards attained in the 2001 national tests at eleven were recognised when the school received the School Achievement Award. National strategies

for literacy and numeracy have also been successfully introduced. There has been insufficient improvement in provision for art and design and DT, and the pace of school improvement could be better.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	B	B	B
Mathematics	C	A	B	B
Science	E	B	C	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Children achieve well in the reception year. By the time they enter Year 1 they attain the standards expected for their age in all areas of learning except for communication, language and literacy. In the 2002 national tests at age seven, standards were below average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared both to schools nationally and to similar schools. In the national tests for pupils at eleven the school came close to achieving the challenging targets in English and mathematics.

Inspection evidence shows that pupils make sound progress at both the infant and junior stages, and that variable standards from year to year are largely linked to differences in the abilities of pupils between year groups. The current Year 2 pupils attain below average standards overall but average standards in some subjects, including mathematics and science. The current Year 6 pupils attain average standards overall, and above average standards in mathematics, music and PE. Pupils do not make sufficient progress in art and design, DT, geography and history and do not attain the standards expected in these subjects by eleven. Although progress is now good in ICT, pupils' standards are still below average because of shortcomings in provision when they were younger. Over recent years the improvement in standards has been broadly in line with the national trend.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are well motivated to learn. They are particularly keen to take part in the visits, special events and clubs that are made available for them
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils respond to the school's high expectations of them and behave well both in lessons and around the school
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils establish very good relationships with others, and are friendly and helpful to adults and to each other. They willingly take on responsibilities, and treat resources with care
Attendance	Well below average. This is linked largely to pupils who go on family holidays during term time

Pupils' positive attitudes to their learning experiences and their very good relationships have a beneficial effect on the quality of their learning. They are keen to take on duties as monitors and take part in the

school council. They have limited opportunities to take responsibility for their learning and work independently.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of both teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, and good in some subjects. In the reception year teaching is satisfactory in communication, language and literacy, and good in all other areas of learning. At the infant and junior stages, English, including literacy, is taught satisfactorily. Mathematics, including numeracy, is taught well. Teaching is also good in ICT, music and PE and promotes the good progress pupils make in these subjects. It is unsatisfactory in art and design and in DT because of shortcomings in subject knowledge.

Teachers provide a positive learning environment, establish good relationships and manage pupils well. As a result, pupils work confidently and purposefully on their activities. Homework is used well to support learning. Lesson plans are of variable quality, and teaching methods are not always matched closely to what pupils are intended to learn. Teachers provide appropriately for all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, and there is no significant variation in the quality of learning for any groups related to gender or ethnic origin. Teachers plan well for pupils with special educational needs in lessons where pupils are grouped by ability, but less well in class lessons where all pupils are given the same worksheet. Pupils with a significant level of special educational need are taught well and make good gains, particularly in their literacy and numeracy skills.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a satisfactory quality and range of learning opportunities for all pupils overall, but a very uneven picture between subjects
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good, particularly for pupils with a significant level of need who make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory overall, but the school makes good use of specialist support to help pupils at an early stage of learning English develop their basic skills in speaking, reading and writing.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Spiritual and cultural development are promoted satisfactorily although knowledge and understanding of the traditions of non-European cultures are not well developed. Social and moral development are both promoted well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Staff know the pupils well and provide a caring environment that promotes pupils' confidence and positive attitudes to their experiences.

Pupils benefit from the many activities that extend and enhance the curriculum such as visits, including residential trips, opportunities to work with poets and an artist in residence, and an excellent range of extra-curricular clubs. Provision in individual subjects is inconsistent between classes because of

differences in the quality of planning. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Although parents' views are generally favourable and the Stokes School Association makes a positive impact on the work of the school, the partnership with parents requires further development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	These are satisfactory overall and ensure clear educational direction. The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher and senior management team, provides good leadership in some aspects of the school's work
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are active and supportive of the headteacher and school. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities but have limited expertise in analysing the results of standardised tests
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has established arrangements for monitoring its performance but priorities for development are not always identified and acted upon quickly enough
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its resources to improve the quality of education provided

The headteacher plays a key role in establishing good relationships amongst all involved in the life of the school. As a result, staff share a strong commitment to meet the needs of their pupils and are very supportive of each other. Shortcomings in roles and responsibilities within the management structure slow the rate at which examples of good and very good practice within the school are spread more widely. This is seen, for instance, in the variable quality of planning. Co-ordinators review and plan development for their subjects. Where subjects are managed well, pupils make good progress and standards are rising.

The school is appropriately provided with teaching and support staff to meet the needs of its pupils. Accommodation is satisfactory overall with limitations for Year 6 pupils and library provision. However, pupils benefit from additional teaching spaces for groups, an ICT suite, two halls and extensive grounds. There is a satisfactory quantity and range of learning resources. The school gives sound attention to seeking value for money when making spending decisions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching is good • Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best • Children are helped to become mature and responsible • Children make good progress • Behaviour is good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about how their children are getting on • The extent to which the school works with parents • The amount of homework

The inspection agreed with most of the positive views of parents. It also confirmed that improvement is required in the quality of pupils' written reports and the school's links with parents. Inspection found the amount of homework was satisfactory and in line with recommendations. However, many parents feel there is too much homework and the school plans to consult further with them. A number of parents were dissatisfied with the school's response to their concerns. The inspection found that the school does not make an adequate response to issues that parents raise.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Although there is some variation from year to year, children's attainment when they enter the reception class is generally below average, particularly in their skills of communication, language and literacy. They achieve well whilst in the reception year and broadly attain the standards expected by the time they enter Year 1 although literacy skills are still below average. Pupils at both the infant and junior stages make satisfactory progress. Pupils currently in Year 2 attain below average standards overall, largely because of their underdeveloped literacy skills. They did not benefit from the recent improvements in planning for reception children that prepare them better for their learning in the infant classes. A change in the entry profile over recent years has resulted in a smaller proportion of higher attaining pupils than in the past. Pupils currently in Year 6 showed broadly average attainment on entry to the school and attain average standards overall by the age of eleven.
2. Standards in the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 2 were below average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to schools nationally and also when compared to similar schools. Teachers' assessment of science shows that standards were similarly below average. Taken over three years, girls have performed significantly better than boys in reading.
3. In the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics were above average when compared to schools nationally and also when compared to similar schools. Standards in science were average when compared to schools nationally and to similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils who attained standards above those expected for their age were average in English, and below average in science. The rate of improvement over the past five years has been broadly in line with the national trend. Taken over three years, girls have performed slightly better than boys.
4. The evidence from inspection shows a slightly different picture. Pupils currently in Year 6 attain average standards overall and achieve satisfactorily. Varying standards from year to year are linked to differences in the abilities of the cohort and in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. However, there are variations in the progress pupils make between subjects. This is because of differing levels in teachers' knowledge and understanding of subjects and because of weaknesses in the quality of planning.
5. Children make good progress in the reception year as a result of good overall teaching, a carefully planned curriculum and an environment that encourages a positive approach to learning. As a result they attain the standards expected by the end of the year in most areas of learning for children of their age, including mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. Although children make satisfactory progress in communication, language and literacy, most do not attain the early learning goals¹ in this area. In contrast, they attain standards in personal, social and emotional development that are above those expected by the end of the reception year.

¹ Early learning goals are the standards children are expected to attain by the end of the reception year.

6. Pupils make sound overall progress at the infant and junior stages because of satisfactory teaching. Although pupils make sound progress in English, standards are still below average at the age of seven. This is linked to the below average language skills when children enter the school. However, they attain satisfactory standards by the age of eleven. In mathematics they make consistently good progress to attain average standards by seven and above average standards by eleven. Pupils make sound progress in science to attain the standards expected by seven and eleven. Standards in the core subjects of English and science are not as high as in mathematics and this is largely due to shortcomings in planning and the overuse of worksheets that are of poor quality and limit achievement.
7. Pupils make consistently good progress in PE in the infant and junior classes to attain above average standards by the age of eleven. Standards are also above average in music by the age of eleven because of good teaching in the junior classes. Although pupils make good progress in ICT in the junior classes, standards in Year 6 are still below average because of the amount of 'catching up' that is required from poorer provision when they were younger. Pupils make sound progress in RE and attain the standards expected by the age of eleven. Pupils at both the infant and junior stages attain standards below those expected in art and design, DT, geography and history. This is because the quality of planning in these subjects is not good enough to ensure pupils build effectively on their skills, knowledge and understanding from year to year. There are also weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge in art and design and in DT, and these further limit the quality of planning and provision.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, with better learning evident in English and mathematics. Most pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans (IEPs). This is especially true of pupils who have statements of special educational need. Inspection evidence does not show any significant difference in the relative progress of boys and girls, but girls display more positive attitudes towards books and reading. There is no significant variation in the progress of any groups related to ethnicity or prior attainment, although higher attainers are not given sufficiently demanding tasks in some lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' good attitudes to the school have been maintained since the last inspection. They are interested in learning and enthusiastic about taking part in the many extra curricular activities such as team sports and clubs. Their high level of sporting achievement continues to make a significant contribution to their personal development. They are positive about their tasks when they find lessons interesting. In Year 2, because their interest was immediately captured when the teacher presented a scary story in an animated way with the help of a hand puppet, they were motivated to work hard on their own stories. Similarly, Year 6 pupils were captivated by the interesting way in which the teacher presented historical information about the development of the microscope and microorganisms. Because pupils were listening so carefully they made excellent progress in their learning in science.
10. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school and makes a significant contribution to how well pupils learn. Parents also think that behaviour is good and say that their children enjoy school. Pupils are very friendly and polite with each other and with adults, always ready to listen and keen to do their work. During the inspection they were eager to show their work and talk about what they were doing in lessons and chat about school life during their lunchtime. Boys and girls of all ages play together well and particularly enjoy using the adventure playgrounds. No incident

of aggressive or poor behaviour was observed, and although both pupils and staff say that rare incidents of bullying occur, the children are clear that they know what to do if it happens and feel that it is dealt with fairly. One pupil was permanently excluded during the last school year because of uncontrollable, aggressive behaviour.

11. Pupils with special educational needs display similar positive attitudes and behaviour as other pupils. Those pupils with IEPs with behavioural targets make good progress. When withdrawn for individual support, pupils with statements of special educational need behave very well and are positive about their work.
12. Good relationships amongst the whole school community are a strength. Pupils know that their opinions and ideas are valued because their teachers listen to them carefully and are quick to praise them for good achievement. The friendly manner in which adults interact with each other gives pupils a very good role model. Pupils are quick to pick up the positive way in which teachers guide them. They try to give the same positive help to one another in lessons, which is beneficial to their learning. This was clearly demonstrated in a DT lesson in which Year 4 pupils were happy to give and receive advice from each other about how to prepare and fit together materials to make models of Tudor torture devices.
13. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities around the school and they fulfil their class-based roles as monitors with care. Year 6 pupils are particularly helpful with the delivery of registers, messages and milk as well as helping the reception children at lunchtime. They all appreciate the voice that the school council gives them in the running of the school, and are happy that their suggestion about re-laying the uneven paving stones has been acted upon. Given their good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning, they are given too few opportunities to take initiative and responsibility for their own learning and consequently this aspect is underdeveloped.
14. Attendance has fallen further in the past year and is now well below the national average. This unsatisfactory rate is mostly due to the large numbers of pupils who are taken out of school during term time to go on family holidays, despite efforts by the school to make parents aware of the detrimental impact this has on their children's learning. Pupils are generally punctual in the morning, thus making a good start to the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of both teaching and learning is satisfactory and promotes the sound progress pupils make. In the lessons seen, all but a small minority were at least satisfactory, and teaching was good or better in over half. In about one lesson in six, teaching was very good or excellent. This shows improvement since the last inspection when teaching was unsatisfactory in almost one lesson in ten.
16. Teaching in the reception year is good and results in pupils making good gains in the areas of learning for children of their age by the time they enter Year 1. Particular strengths are lively and stimulating teaching of the whole class and a positive approach to children's contributions. The teacher listens to children very carefully and values what they say, promoting confidence and spoken language. Large numbers are managed very well in whole class activities. Improvement could be made in the use of time and organisation of the day to ensure that children have more contact with adults in activities such as when they work with the computer or books.

17. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the infant and junior classes but variable between classes and subjects. Teaching is consistently good in Year 6. Teaching is good in mathematics, music and PE and promotes the good quality of learning in these subjects. This is because teachers have good expertise and lessons are planned and delivered well. Teaching is unsatisfactory in art and design and in DT and pupils do not achieve satisfactorily in these subjects. This is because there are shortcomings in teachers' knowledge and understanding and, as a result, planned activities do not promote sufficient progress. Literacy is taught satisfactorily throughout the school and numeracy is taught well. Good account is taken of the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language so they make good progress in their speaking and literacy skills and similar progress to their peers across the curriculum.
18. Teachers provide a caring environment and establish positive relationships. As a result, pupils feel secure and confident and try hard to complete their tasks correctly. Teachers have good strategies for managing pupils so no time is wasted in dealing with inappropriate behaviour. Those who share classes collaborate very well to provide their pupils with continuity in their learning experiences. Homework is used well to extend pupils' learning in, for example, English and mathematics.
19. When pupils with statements of special educational need are withdrawn for individual support, they are well taught. Teachers have developed very good relationships and use a good range of activities, including educational games, to support their learning. In whole class sessions, the organisation of groups of pupils according to prior attainment, particularly in mathematics, helps to ensure good progress by pupils with special educational needs. However, not enough thought is given to meeting the needs of these pupils across the whole curriculum, often because all pupils are given the same worksheet to complete.
20. Where teaching is good or better, teachers demonstrate good levels of subject expertise. They select carefully from a variety of teaching methods to ensure activities are matched well to what pupils are intended to learn, and also engage pupils' interest. These activities are managed at a good pace so that pupils remain attentive and learn at a good rate. This was seen, for example, in a Year 6 English lesson. Through careful use of collaborative learning and role-play, pupils successfully adopted formal vocabulary and phrases to prepare the prosecution's charges against *Macavity the Cat*.
21. Weaknesses within lessons include poor quality planning, with confusion over learning intentions and planned activities, and insufficient account taken of matching tasks to the differing needs of pupils within the class. Tasks for higher attainers, for example, do not always make sufficient demands of them, particularly in science and in subjects such as geography.
22. Teachers often make links between subjects to make activities more meaningful to pupils. In some cases, as in history and art, this results in tasks that do not promote effective learning in either subject. There are also shortcomings in the teaching methods selected, with too much reliance on worksheets of poor quality and overuse of television and radio programmes. Overall, too many of the tasks provided are adult-directed so that pupils have insufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their learning and work independently. This has an adverse effect on the extent to which pupils are able to develop their skills in subjects such as science, history and DT, and in working creatively in art and design.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

23. The quality and range of learning opportunities offered to all pupils is satisfactory. The curriculum for reception children is carefully planned and takes good account of the areas of learning for children of their age. It provides positive experiences that prepare them well for their later learning.
24. The school provides a broad curriculum for infant and junior pupils that meets statutory requirements for National Curriculum subjects and RE, with one minor exception. This is the use of sensor equipment in ICT, which the school is addressing. Mathematics, music and PE are strengths within the overall curriculum, and there has been improvement in ICT and RE since the previous inspection. There are weaknesses in provision for art and design, DT, geography and history, which impact on the standards reached by pupils in these subjects. This is due to shortcomings in medium- and long-term planning which adversely affect the rate at which pupils build effectively on their skills, knowledge and understanding from year to year.
25. The national numeracy strategy has been effectively implemented and is having a significant impact on pupils' achievements. The literacy strategy is in place but has been less effective in raising standards in, for example, reading by the age of seven. The excessive reliance on worksheets limits the extent to which learning in subjects across the curriculum is used to promote literacy skills. Similarly, insufficient use is made of computers in classrooms to practise ICT skills and support learning in other subjects.
26. The school makes good efforts to provide an inclusive curriculum for all pupils, including opportunities for all to take part in residential trips and attend clubs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make similar progress to their peers.
27. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is generally good because they are supported by detailed IEPs, which teachers follow. An appropriate mix of in-class support and withdrawal for small group or individual work helps to ensure that provision in the areas of numeracy and literacy is usually good. In other subjects, less care is taken to meet the specific needs of these pupils, although there are examples of good practice, as seen in science in Years 4 and 6.
28. Personal, social and health education is good and includes citizenship. All classes have this area of development timetabled. The school promotes the 'Healthy Schools' initiative and the importance of a healthy diet is a focus in some lessons. There is appropriate provision for sex education and attention to the misuse of drugs.
29. Provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent. Particularly impressive are the clubs and out-of-hours activities run by the school. Not only are these extensive in scope but are also very well attended by enthusiastic pupils. They have a good impact on pupil achievement and are clearly enjoyable. Sports clubs are very popular and open to both boys and girls. A very large number of pupils were seen participating in cross-country running and all ages took part in the fitness club. Pupils were also seen cooking, playing the recorder and having study support. A wide range of visits, activities and experiences such as working with an artist in residence, is offered to all pupils and enhances all aspects of the curriculum. A good number of visitors are invited to the school. These include poets who gave a performance and

conducted workshops as part of book week. Residential visits are arranged for pupils in Years 2 and 6, promoting independence as well as a challenging learning experience.

30. Links with the community are good. A local charity has provided the school with equipment to improve the grounds. Pupils benefit from opportunities to perform to others such as when they take part in carol-singing in the village and also at a home for the elderly. Employees from local companies help pupils' literacy skills through the 'Right to Read' scheme. Links with other schools and educational institutions are good and have a positive impact on the work of the school. Reception staff have good links with pre-school providers. Teachers help a smooth transition of pupils to secondary school through meetings and induction visits. The curriculum is further enhanced through opportunities provided by work experience students and teachers being trained in the school. Teachers also participate in meetings and training sessions with colleagues from other schools in the locality, and this has a beneficial effect on the school's provision.
31. Provision for pupils' personal development is good overall. Spiritual development is promoted satisfactorily. Regular 'circle'² times give pupils the opportunity to discuss their feelings. Planned activities, such as the recent poetry day, help them to appreciate and enjoy the beauty of words, and good teaching in hymn practice results in singing that is enthusiastic and uplifting. Lessons make a sound contribution as seen, for example when reception children blew into the sails of boats they had made and marvelled at how well they skimmed across a container of water.
32. There is good provision to promote pupils' moral development through, for example, helping to devise class rules. A clear moral code and consistently applied behaviour policy ensures pupils are aware of expectations. Their good behaviour is rewarded with praise, stickers, team points and with the Stokes achievement gold medal and cups in the achievement assembly. Such rewards ensure that this aspect of school life remains a matter of high priority. Moral issues are explored in assemblies during which the virtues within the Ten Commandments are covered during the school year. Involvement in the eco committee encourages pupils to explore moral issues in relation to preserving our planet.
33. The school promotes social development well, particularly through the many opportunities pupils are given to take part in team sports, residential visits in Years 2 and 6 and performances. Participation in sporting activities has brought considerable success to the school in areas such as cross-country running, race walking, athletics and girls' and boys' football. These provide opportunities for pupils, not only to challenge their own limits, but to get to know children from other schools. Annual productions involve all pupils and help to develop their self-confidence when they perform for their parents and friends. The choir also takes part in regular performances such as the Stokes carol concert at local churches. Year 6 pupils entertain and serve tea to elderly local residents. Pupils take part enthusiastically in fundraising activities organised by the school, such as dressing up for Red Nose Day. Their social skills are also promoted well through encouragement to work together in pairs and small groups in lessons. A good example was when Year 5 pupils worked successfully with each other to improve their poetry writing skills, listening to and writing rap lyrics. The school council gives pupils the opportunity to learn about how communities function in a democratic way. Their request for changes to the food

² Occasions when children sit in a circle and are encouraged to express their own thoughts and feelings to each other

served in the cafeteria-style lunch system, for example, was taken up and acted upon by the school.

34. Cultural development is promoted satisfactorily. Western European culture and traditions are promoted well through, for example, the study of Tudor times in Year 4 history and the work of Matisse in Year 6 art. Pupils are also given opportunities to work with local artists and enjoy different styles of music. Major religions are studied in RE and festivals such as Diwali are celebrated. Year 6 pupils compose tunes to perform on the school's good selection of African drums. However, insufficient use is made of locally available resources to help pupils appreciate the cultures and contributions of ethnic minority groups within the community. Pupils are not prepared well enough for life in a culturally diverse society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school continues to provide a warm and caring environment in which pupils are happy and feel secure. Teachers know their pupils well and are interested in them. Two Year 6 teachers, for example, showed genuine pleasure when told that an asthmatic pupil could go swimming for the first time. There are good procedures for helping children settle quickly into the reception class. Concern for pupils' welfare is shown in the provision of homework support through an after-school study group. The needs of the large Year 6 class are met well through regular use of an additional teaching space to extend the classroom, and additional teaching support for most of the week. The school has also reacted positively to the need for better changing facilities for the oldest pupils.
36. Written procedures to monitor health and safety issues remain good, although practice is not as good as it was at the time of the last inspection and some policies such as those dealing with health and safety and bullying require updating. Internet safety is taken seriously, ensuring that pupils access only authorised sites and are not endangered by disclosing any personal information. While the provision of a cafeteria-style lunch system in response to pupils' wishes is to be commended, it needs further development to lessen the long queues that currently form while children select and pay for their meals. There is also a need to address parents' concerns about some pupils choosing unhealthy and unbalanced meals.
37. Behaviour is well managed in lessons. Teachers successfully create a positive learning environment in which pupils feel they are treated fairly and equally. The policy contains clear guidelines for dealing with any inappropriate behaviour. This is followed consistently, thus helping pupils to understand what is expected. A good range of rewards is used as encouragement. Sensible sanctions such as the merit card system are very successful with the few pupils who need support to understand how to act in a socially acceptable way. All forms of bullying and harassment are taken seriously and the school has effective systems to deal with any racial incidents, ensuring they are recorded, monitored and reported to the local authority. The headteacher is designated responsible for child protection and he ensures that all members of staff are regularly updated and clear about the required procedures. Pupils are supervised well at all times during the day and the good relationships that staff have with them ensure that problems are dealt with quickly and effectively.
38. Personal development is well supported. Adults listen to pupils carefully and take their opinions seriously. In Year 1, for example, pupils' awareness of feelings was encouraged when exploring changes that have happened to them since they were

babies and, in Year 6, when they reminisced in their writing about milestones in their lives. A good range of visitors, including police and fire officers and the 'Life' Caravan, help to make them aware of personal dangers, including those resulting from substance abuse.

39. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Arrangements for assessing children's attainment when they enter the school are good, as are procedures for assessing standards in mathematics, science and PE throughout the school. Test results are analysed and each September pupils are set targets that are reviewed annually. These procedures enable individual pupil progress in English, mathematics and science to be tracked effectively through the school. Good use is made of this information in mathematics, for example in placing pupils into attainment sets in some year groups and in identifying those pupils requiring additional learning support. A portfolio of selected pieces of assessed work is retained for each pupil and this is also used to track progress. In all other subjects, apart from RE, pupils are assessed annually against the levels of the National Curriculum and this information is recorded. However, use of this information is not yet ensuring sound progress in all subjects.
40. There are good procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs, including information obtained through links with playgroups and nurseries before children join the school. Regular assessment of pupils, linked to the targets in their IEPs, monitors their progress effectively. Effective use is made of the information gained to plan priorities for learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The vast majority of parents are positive about the work of the school. They rightly feel that their children are happy in school, and they are pleased with the improvements to the playground and in ICT resources. Parents receive regular newsletters and contribute to planning future development through completing a questionnaire and taking part in the school's Ethos Day³. There is, however, a small but significant number who feel the school's links with them are underdeveloped and they are not kept well enough informed. They also feel dissatisfied with the school's response to their concerns. Their strength of feeling has come as a surprise to the school. This represents a decline in standards since the time of the last inspection when the partnership with parents was found to be strong. The governors are currently considering the establishment of a 'surgery' for parents to discuss issues, and this has the potential to go some way towards improving the situation.
42. Parents indicate that they feel welcome in school and are encouraged to play an active part in helping their children's learning. The Stokes School Association continues to organise a wide range of social activities such as the summer and Christmas 'fayres' and a recent beetle drive. These are well supported by parents and help to raise substantial additional funds that have been used to pay for picnic benches, two adventure play areas in the playground and a new kiln. Parents are regularly invited to, and are highly supportive of, class assemblies, school productions, and sports and activity days. Curriculum meetings are much less well attended.

³ Ethos Day is when staff, governors and parents come together to discuss their vision and priorities for the school

43. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are effectively involved in helping to set learning targets for their children in the regular review procedures. This was an area of weakness at the time of the previous inspection. The school makes considerable efforts to arrange these reviews at times convenient for parents.
44. Parents are given limited information about what their children will be learning. They are justified in their view that leaving this until the first parents' evening in October is too late and they would like more written information. Pupils' written reports are generally satisfactory. The best give detailed information about progress and targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science. However, in many cases, information about other subjects refers only to activities undertaken during the year. A small number of parents have complained that written information did not match the oral feedback they were given about achievement, and that they are not contacted soon enough when there are concerns over their children's progress. The school has not kept parents of the current Year 6 pupils sufficiently informed about arrangements for this large class, so that a number have been confused about the staffing provision.
45. National guidelines are currently being followed in relation to the setting of homework and inspection findings confirm that it makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. However, parents are clearly dissatisfied with the amount their children are required to do. Many feel there is too much and this detracts from quality family time. The school is planning to consult further with parents to develop a mutually acceptable amount of homework that benefits children's learning throughout the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. Overall, leadership and management of the school are sound. The headteacher's vision of an inclusive education that promotes pupils' social, emotional and physical – as well as academic – development is demonstrated in the many enrichment opportunities that enhance the quality of the curriculum. He gives a high priority to establishing a community in which all pupils and adults feel valued and work in harmony together. This results in the very good relationships that exist at all levels. He is supported well by the deputy headteacher who takes responsibility for many aspects of the school's work.
47. The senior management team comprises the headteacher, deputy and a senior teacher. They each play a prominent part in supporting colleagues and disseminating information, as well as taking and implementing organisational decisions. However, the strategic responsibilities and procedures of the senior management team are underdeveloped and it does not contribute sufficiently to monitoring standards and progress throughout the school. As a result, they are insufficiently informed about shortcomings in standards and provision in subjects such as geography and history.
48. Similarly, although all co-ordinators actively review and develop their subjects, there is a lack of clarity over their role in monitoring planning and pupils' developing skills, knowledge and understanding in each year. Opportunities have been provided for co-ordinators to monitor teaching in their subjects, although there has been limited class release time over the last two years due to financial constraints. The management of some subjects is also impeded by the inappropriate allocation of responsibilities between teachers, so that one co-ordinator has three subjects to manage. The current emphasis on teachers, co-ordinators and members of the senior management team working in their own preferred ways limits the extent to which examples of very good practice in planning, teaching and learning are spread more

widely through the school. As a result of these factors, the quality of managing individual subjects ranges from very good to unsatisfactory and there is too much variation in pupils' rates of progress between subjects and classes.

49. The school analyses national test data and its own assessment information to evaluate its performance and identify appropriate priorities for development. Recommended procedures for performance management are in place and, together with a programme of monitoring teaching, are helping school improvement. However, the shortcomings in management roles mean that priorities are not always identified or acted upon quickly enough, and the pace of school improvement should be better. This is seen, for example, in art and design and DT where there has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection.
50. Governors are active and supportive of the work of the school and fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively. This is seen, for example, in the good provision for pupils with special educational needs that is managed very well by the co-ordinator and monitored by two named governors. The chair of governors works closely with the headteacher and plays a leading role in the management of committees. Limited expertise amongst the governing body in analysing the results of standardised tests constrains the extent to which they monitor the school's overall performance.
51. The school makes good strategic use of resources, including specific grants, and financial decisions are linked appropriately to educational priorities. The budget went into deficit three years ago for reasons beyond its control, linked to a reducing number of pupils on roll. This situation has been managed carefully and the school expects to have successfully resolved the deficit by the end of the current financial year. The school has made considerable and often successful efforts in seeking additional funding which has improved pupils' opportunities, for example in aspects of PE. Day-to-day financial procedures are managed well by the secretary and overseen by a part-time bursar.
52. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily. The school consults with parents over planned development and good attention is given to attaining good value when making spending decisions. Arrangements for comparing the school's performance with that of other schools are underdeveloped.
53. There is an appropriate number of suitably experienced teaching and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum and pupils. Additional teachers are used to ensure Year 6 pupils are not disadvantaged by the large size of class. The school's concern to promote the professional development of staff is shown in current arrangements to achieve the 'Investors in People' standard. The time and efforts given by staff to extra-curricular opportunities, residential visits and to providing experiences that enrich the curriculum demonstrate their strong commitment to the pupils and to the work of the school.
54. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. Although the Year 6 classroom provides limited space on the occasions when the whole class works together, pupils benefit from two halls, an ICT suite and many additional areas in which groups can work. The school is making efforts to obtain funding to improve the library accommodation which is too small, poorly resourced and does not support pupils' learning effectively. The external grounds are extensive and attractively laid out with planted areas and established trees. They provide a good environment for relaxation as well as for learning in PE and other subjects. There is a sound quantity and range of learning resources overall. However, there are not enough fiction and information books of

good quality. Library and classroom book collections include many that are out of date or in poor condition. In contrast, resources are good for mathematics and PE, as are the ICT resources in the dedicated suite.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to continue to improve, the governors, headteacher and staff should now
- (1) Raise standards in art and design, DT, geography and history by
 - improving the quality of planning in these four subjects
 - developing teachers' subject knowledge in both art and design and DT
 - improving arrangements to monitor standards and progress in each year, particularly in the skills of each subject
(Paragraph numbers 7, 17, 24, 84-87, 88-91, 92-95, 96-99)
 - (2) Improve the quality of planning at long-, medium- and short-term levels so that
 - long-term planning ensures pupils build effectively on their skills, knowledge and understanding in each year
 - medium-term plans are of a consistently high enough quality to support teachers' lesson planning
 - teaching methods, activities and resources are planned to meet the differing needs of pupils within each lesson
 - where two subjects are linked within a topic, tasks are matched closely to specific objectives for the subject that is the focus of the lesson
(Paragraph numbers 6-7, 21-22, 24)
 - (3) Provide regular opportunities for pupils to work independently and take responsibility for their learning
(Paragraph numbers 13, 22)
 - (4) Improve arrangements for monitoring and improving the school's performance by
 - clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the senior management team and co-ordinators in monitoring standards and progress in all subjects throughout the school
 - agreeing and implementing procedures through which the senior management team and co-ordinators identify strengths and areas for development within each subject
 - improving the distribution of subject responsibilities between teachers
 - targeting class release time for key stage managers and co-ordinators of subjects that are priorities for whole school development as soon as the school's financial situation makes this possible
 - developing governors' expertise in using assessment data to monitor the performance of the school
(Paragraph numbers 47-50)
 - (5) Develop the school's partnership with parents by
 - keeping them more closely informed about the curriculum, arrangements for teaching their children, and how their children are getting on
 - ensuring that parents' concerns are responded to quickly and effectively
(Paragraph numbers 41, 44)

Other minor issues which should be considered by the school

- a) Improve library accommodation and the quantity of good fiction and information books available for pupils
- b) Prepare pupils more effectively for life in a culturally diverse society
- c) Continue to implement the current good procedures to improve the rate of attendance

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	10	29	29	3	0	0
Percentage	1	14	40	40	4	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	327
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	53

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	22	30	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	11	17
	Girls	29	28	29
	Total	43	39	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (84)	75 (92)	88 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	15	14
	Girls	29	26	29
	Total	41	41	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (88)	79 (86)	83 (88)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	39	26	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	31	35
	Girls	25	23	26
	Total	56	54	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (93)	83 (87)	94 (93)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	32	21
	Girls	24	22	14
	Total	52	54	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (82)	83 (78)	81 (87)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	323	1	1
White – Irish			
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian	2		
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese	3		
Any other ethnic group	7		
No ethnic group recorded			

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.4
Average class size	28.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	220

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	675042
Total expenditure	666803
Expenditure per pupil	1868
Balance brought forward from previous year	-14061
Balance carried forward to next year	-5822

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	337
Number of questionnaires returned	146

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	33	6	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	47	46	3	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	47	3	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	46	13	1	1
The teaching is good.	56	41	1	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	43	19	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	38	5	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	38	2	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	32	48	16	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	52	38	3	5	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	44	1	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	63	29	5	0	3

Other issues raised by parents

A significant minority of parents were dissatisfied with the school's response to their concerns

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

56. Standards reached by the time children enter Year 1 are broadly average. This is not as high as at the time of the last inspection but reflects a change in attainment on entry to the school in the important area of communication, language and literacy. Children make good overall progress due to the good quality of teaching and learning. The current year is expected to follow the same pattern. Regular assessments are made to indicate what each child has achieved towards the early learning goals in each area of learning and information is passed to parents. Information from assessment on entry is used to group children, but not sufficiently to prioritise learning needs in language skills. The manager of the Foundation Stage is new to the role and has already made changes to improve resources and planning. She has made a good start towards improving standards.

Personal, social and emotional development

57. Children make good progress in this area due to high quality teaching, a consistent approach to the management of behaviour and encouragement for children to share and respect each other. As a result, they attain standards above those expected by the time they enter Year 1. The children are happy to come to school and settle down well. They know the routines of the class and participate eagerly in the activities. A child new to English is sensitively helped to join in and follow the routines of the class. The children get on exceptionally well with each other, secure in their understanding of how to behave due to the good models provided by adults. Children know what is right and wrong, to say sorry if one accidentally hurts another, and when to go to an adult for help. As a result of good management, children co-operate well in large groups. They showed pleasure in the achievements of others in a music lesson. There are good opportunities for children to get to explore their feelings and to reflect on their learning. They are independent in selecting activities and co-operate well in small groups. They show less independence in their thinking when activities are too adult directed and this constrains their learning.

Communication, language and literacy

58. Teaching in this area of learning is variable, but satisfactory overall. The promotion of spoken language is very good. For example, the teacher gives her own example of news so children have a model to follow. She encourages more complex language through effective use of open questions. Opportunities for children to reflect on what they learn are good. The teacher asked a group of older children to tell her what they had learned earlier in the day whilst working with another adult, which encouraged them to talk in extended sentences. Skilful questioning encouraged them to describe in more detail. Practical activities, such as exploring the effect of wind, help to increase vocabulary. Whole class teaching of reading and writing is good. The teacher is very animated when reading stories so that children listen intently. They listened to poems about the wind and closed their eyes to reflect on sounds they have heard. However, the teaching of writing for children who are at a very early stage of learning letters and sounds is less effective. They are not all expected to write their names on their work, and only a very small minority write consonants to match sounds in words. Above average children make satisfactory progress in reading, but

the majority do not read with adults often enough either individually or in very small groups and this limits the progress they make.

Mathematical development

59. Teaching of mathematics is good, with a strong emphasis on practical work and in developing understanding. As a result, children make good progress in this area of learning. Enthusiastic teaching of number action rhymes ensures children learn to count up to ten. Great fun was had when all tried to count up to twenty standing on one leg. The teacher targets questions well so all are involved, and encourages children to explain their methods. One child was able to suggest a way to count up to twenty using fingers. A child at a very early stage of learning English was encouraged to say how old her brother is. Group work built successfully on learning in this lesson so that lower attaining children made good progress in counting with dice and in developing understanding of *more* and *less*. There is a good emphasis on practical work and in developing understanding.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

60. Teaching in this area is generally good, and promotes the good progress children make, for example, in their exploration and investigation and sense of time and place. In one lesson, children's interest in the natural world was stimulated by an outside activity to explore the effects of wind on a variety of materials. They noticed the direction of the wind and differences in the movement of objects such as balloons, feathers and flags. Good teaching enabled them to use what they had learned to think about the movement of clouds in the sky. Children constructed boats out of junk material and used what they had learned about wind to blow these across a tray of water. Some aspects of activities are overly adult controlled. For example, the boats were made to a similar pattern rather than giving children materials to explore which float and which can be blown. Progress in ICT is limited due to low expectations of what children can achieve when using the computer. However, children are competent in using a tape recorder to listen to stories.

Creative development

61. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children engage in imaginative play when they join with others to make a birthday party using party hats they have made. One took the role of waiter, writing orders on his pad and bringing them from the café. Children work with different media and techniques although displays indicate that these often lack opportunity for individuality and experimentation. Due to the teacher's very good subject knowledge children have a good experience of music. They learn to distinguish between long and short sounds and the differences between wood and metal instruments. Children sing very sweetly, especially *Let's play a game, what is my name?* when they sing the refrain individually to the whole class. Many have good pitch and rhythm.

Physical development

62. Teaching is good overall and very good for large movement, so that children learn to move with good control and co-ordination. They display satisfactory skills when using scissors and other small tools, and generally hold their pencils correctly. In a PE lesson, children used the space well and were very sensible in their choice of apparatus. They showed good independence in completing a sequence of activities

as they moved around nine bases. Good intervention by the teacher enabled them to improve their skills in jumping, rolling and landing. The assistants were effective in ensuring health and safety aspects but did not interact with children to improve the quality of their jumping skills.

ENGLISH

63. Since the last inspection there has been a steady improvement in test results at the age of eleven from below to above average. Inspection evidence shows that, from entering Year 1 with below average skills in communication, language and literacy, pupils make satisfactory progress at both the infant and junior stages. Pupils currently in Year 6 attain average standards. Standards by seven are below average and not as high as at the last inspection. This is linked largely to lower attainment in language skills when children first enter the school.
64. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in their listening skills. Because of their positive attitudes to learning, they listen effectively to stories, to teachers' instructions and to each other's contributions. Speaking skills are less well developed. Pupils are friendly and enjoy talking to adults and to each other. They are keen to answer questions in lessons and speak confidently in small and large groups. Many show a limited capacity to develop and explain their ideas clearly to others. However, pupils develop their speaking skills well when given opportunities to work collaboratively with a partner or as part of a small group, as seen in lessons in Years 2, 5 and 6.
65. Reading is taught effectively through literacy lessons, particularly when the whole class works with a 'big' book, through group and individual reading opportunities and through encouragement to read at home with parents. Although younger pupils enjoy listening to stories and poems, some are not sufficiently engaged by the books they are given to read. This results in an undue emphasis on reading words accurately with scant regard to enjoying and understanding the story. The school has recognised that infant boys make relatively slower progress than girls in reading and are introducing information books to increase their interest. Pupils generally make sound progress in the fluency and accuracy of their reading as they move through the junior classes. However, lower and average attainers in Year 6 are given very demanding texts that limit the extent to which they can enjoy and understand what they read. Pupils demonstrate sound skills in locating and using information from books and from the Internet.
66. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress in their writing and, in some lessons, make good progress. They write in a range of forms including stories, poems and reports, and use word-processing programs for some of their work. Most Year 2 pupils convey their ideas in a sequence of sentences. Few use a varied vocabulary and sentence structure to maintain a consistent narrative style. Year 6 pupils organise their writing appropriately for the task and reader, and are beginning to use grammatically complex sentences and well-chosen vocabulary. Progress in writing throughout the school is constrained, however, by the over-use of commercial worksheets. This limits opportunities for pupils to sustain and develop their ideas whilst practising their writing skills. The school gives careful and systematic attention to handwriting and spelling. As a result, most pupils use a joined script that is neat and legible and, by the age of eleven, correctly spell words of more than one syllable that conform to regular patterns.

67. The quality of both teaching and learning is satisfactory. Although teaching is good in many lessons, variations in the quality of planning and teaching between classes means that pupils do not make consistently good progress from year to year. Teachers manage pupils well and establish good relationships in their classes. Whole class lesson introductions are usually planned well. Teachers are skilled in engaging pupils' enjoyment in 'big' books, and in encouraging them to answer questions and share their ideas. Pupils are motivated to learn and try hard to carry out their tasks correctly.
68. In lessons where teaching is good or very good, teachers have good levels of subject expertise and plan activities well to support learning. As a result, pupils make good gains during the lesson, particularly where the activities engage their interest and are managed at a good pace. This was seen, for example, in a Year 6 lesson in which pupils increased their knowledge of poetic forms, explored rhythm and rhyme and also developed their use of formal language. T.S. Eliot's poem *Macavity the Mystery Cat* was well chosen for this purpose and engaged the interest of the pupils. A brief video presentation of its performance in the musical *Cats* helped to bring it to life and extended their enjoyment further. The pupils were highly motivated by the opportunity to work collaboratively and to use role-play. These well chosen teaching methods, together with the good pace that kept pupils interested and attentive, promoted good progress in skills, knowledge and understanding, including the use of formal language.
69. Shortcomings within lessons that are overall satisfactory include tasks that are selected with insufficient regard to what pupils are intended to learn and which teaching methods and resources are most likely to be successful. In lessons where commercial worksheets are used, for example, these are rarely matched closely to the learning needs of all pupils, despite teachers providing examples at differing levels of difficulty for groups within the class. Undue time spent colouring in a worksheet in one lesson, for example, did not promote sufficient progress in any aspect of English.
70. English is managed satisfactorily by the co-ordinator who has monitored teaching and carried out a recent review of the subject. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection in successfully implementing the national literacy strategy and in raising standards by the age of eleven. Although medium-term planning ensures provision meets statutory requirements, the quality varies between year groups. In the weaker examples, it gives insufficient guidance to support teachers' short-term plans. As a result, tasks do not consistently promote satisfactory progress for all groups in every lesson. Recent training for teachers has improved provision for writing, but pupils' progress is constrained by insufficient opportunities for sustained writing, both in English and in other subjects of the curriculum. The curriculum is enriched by events such as book weeks and visits from theatre groups and poets. A systematic programme to help pupils with reading difficulties is supporting their progress effectively. There is good provision for pupils with a significant level of special educational need who make good progress in literacy skills. The school is not provided with a sufficient range and quantity of books of high quality to motivate pupils and support their reading.

MATHEMATICS

71. By the end of Year 2 standards are average and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average in all areas of mathematics. There has been good improvement in national test results at eleven since the time of the last inspection. Pupils make good

progress at both the infant and junior stages and achieve well as a result of the good and often very good teaching and the school's successful implementation of the numeracy strategy. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of effective support from teachers and classroom assistants and the good emphasis on teaching basic numeracy skills.

72. Pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics and enjoy lessons. They apply themselves well to mathematical tasks, and quickly settle to class and group activities after the initial whole class sessions. Pupils co-operate well, often working for long periods with sustained concentration. The pace of working is usually good.
73. A clear focus on developing numeracy skills helps pupils in Year 1 to extend counting skills so that by the end of Year 2 higher and average attainers are confident and proficient in working with numbers up to 100. They add and take away numbers, making good use of their satisfactory recall of addition and subtraction facts involving numbers up to twenty. Pupils understand and apply the strategies of doubling and halving. Lower attaining pupils count and write numbers to twenty. They add and take away small numbers with the help of counters. An appropriate focus on work with shape results in average and higher attainers naming and describing the properties of simple two-dimensional shapes such as triangle, square and circle. Similarly, a good focus on the development of mathematical vocabulary improves pupils' ability to use this when discussing their work or explaining how they solve simple problems.
74. By the end of Year 6, higher and average attainers have a good grasp of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and work confidently with high numbers. For example, they use long multiplication to multiply numbers in thousands by two figure numbers. These pupils have good recall of multiplication tables. Lower attainers show a satisfactory understanding of hundreds, tens and units and use this to solve simple multiplication and division problems using single whole numbers. However, their mental recall of number facts is below average. The school is aware of this and these pupils receive effective support to increase their learning in this area. All pupils collect data and produce graphs. Overall attainment in this area is good. Lower attainers produce simple bar graphs. Higher attaining and average attaining pupils use graphs to record how things change over time. They interpret sets of data finding the mode, range, mean and median.
75. The quality of teaching is generally good across the school and often very good. The national numeracy strategy is followed effectively and this ensures good coverage of the national curriculum. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and ensures that basic numeracy is taught well. Teachers' weekly planning documents identify what is to be learnt, key vocabulary and the resources required. Work is matched well to the differing needs of pupils, including higher attainers who are set appropriately challenging tasks.
76. Where teaching is most effective, pupils are encouraged to discuss their work, using a range of mathematical vocabulary to explain the strategies they use in solving problems. A strong feature of mathematics within the school is the focus teachers give to using and applying mathematics. Problem solving and investigative work are strengths of the curriculum, especially for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Most teachers make good use of assessment techniques to check on pupils' understanding in lessons. Work is regularly marked and there are often comments offering support and encouragement. The use of homework to support learning is good. It is set

regularly and referred to in lessons as part of the learning process.

77. Overall, opportunities to use learning in other subjects of the curriculum to promote numeracy skills are limited, although there are some examples in geography, history and science. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. He monitors the subject well and has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. An effective action plan is supporting the drive to raise standards further. A wide range of assessment information is collected and is used effectively to monitor progress of all groups of pupils and to aid the setting of targets for improved standards. Resources are plentiful and used well to support teaching and learning.

SCIENCE

78. Pupils' attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is broadly average. Most pupils achieve the expected standard in knowledge and understanding of science. Pupils' scientific skills are less well developed. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Standards in national tests at eleven have been maintained since then, although with some variation from year to year. Although pupils in Year 6 reach broadly average standards, they are not achieving as well as they should. This is related to the excessive use of undemanding worksheets.
79. In Years 1 and 2, pupils display satisfactory knowledge about parts of the human body and the use of the senses. During a well-organised session, Year 2 pupils made good progress in understanding that darkness is the absence of light. They use good descriptive vocabulary to describe properties of different materials.
80. During Years 3 to 6, pupils make satisfactory progress owing to mainly sound teaching. Better learning occurs when teachers demonstrate very good subject knowledge. This was used in an excellent Year 6 lesson to challenge pupils and extend their understanding of the history of science and its contribution to society. Pupils in Years 3 and 5 assign different foods correctly to the most appropriate group, such as dairy produce or fruit and vegetables. They have a satisfactory understanding of a balanced diet. Year 4 pupils appreciate that the force of friction has advantageous and disadvantageous consequences. In Year 6, pupils know that microorganisms are too small to see without the aid of a microscope and are involved in the process of decay.
81. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and hence pupils' learning is sound. Only in the occasional very good or excellent lesson, as seen in Year 6 and a Year 4 class, does learning become better. The pace of learning in relation to scientific skills is limited by too much direction, which restricts opportunities for pupils to develop independence. Although pupils carry out various practical experiments, they tend to be teacher directed and there are few opportunities for pupils to investigate scientific questions that they have raised. A particular weakness is that pupils have few opportunities to suggest how a scientific question could be investigated, and then to select resources to carry out this out. In almost all lessons, teachers rely too heavily on undemanding worksheets that are not adapted to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Throughout the school, much of pupils' work in each year group, whether in books or on worksheets, is similar. In only a few cases is attention given to modifying the task to support pupils whose language skills are below those of most other pupils in the class.

82. In the best lessons, teachers maintain interest and pupils are enthusiastic, especially when the opportunity arises for practical activities. Good subject knowledge is used effectively to explain and promote understanding of scientific principles. Confident pupils often contribute willingly to question and answer sessions. In Years 4 and 6 especially, teachers use questions well, and ensure all pupils are involved. Pupils' attitudes to science, and their behaviour in lessons, are very good.
83. The curriculum is based on a variety of topics arising mainly from a commercial scheme. This ensures sufficient breadth, but not enough thought is given to the development of scientific skills. There is a lack of clarity in the way in which both knowledge and skills are extended as pupils move through the school. For instance, pupils in Years 3 and 5 undertook virtually the same task in relation to a balanced diet. There is also insufficient account taken of developing literacy and numeracy skills when planning work in science. Science makes a limited contribution to pupils' personal development in most classes. Although pupils work together on experiments, there are few opportunities for them to take responsibility for their learning and work independently. In the best lessons, pupils are introduced to the lives of famous scientists, such those involved in the production of the first microscopes, or the work of Isaac Newton, and their impact on our lives today. Year 6 pupils were captivated as the teacher discussed the link between penicillin and the blue mould sometimes seen on bread, and how the blue mould used to be introduced into Stilton cheese. Assessment is well organised, with the effective use of tests and analysis of National Curriculum assessments. Plans are in hand to introduce a system that allows pupils to evaluate their own progress in developing their scientific skills. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and support to colleagues. Resources, while satisfactory, require extending, especially in relation to ICT and reference books.

ART AND DESIGN

84. Standards are below the levels expected by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils do not make satisfactory progress in this subject and there has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection. By the age of eleven, pupils demonstrate limited knowledge about the work of artists and have not developed their skills satisfactorily in print making, sculpture or in working with textiles. Pupils at both the infant and junior stages have insufficient opportunities to work creatively in two and three dimensions to express their own imaginative ideas.
85. There are individual examples of work in which pupils demonstrate satisfactory standards. These include Year 1 pupils' use of collage technique to create an underwater picture, Year 5 pupils' use of paint to explore tone and colour to represent trees, and Year 6 pupils' work in the style of *L'Escargot* by Matisse. Observational drawing is developed effectively through appropriate teaching and regular opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their skills. This is seen, for example, in Year 4 pupils' skills in using soft pencils to represent Hindu artefacts and charcoal to produce carefully proportioned portraits. The technical skills of working with clay are developed well so that pupils produce a variety of products such as candleholders in the design of a Tudor rose.
86. The quality of both teaching and learning were satisfactory in the few lessons seen. However, scrutiny of work, including displays around the school, and discussion with pupils shows that teaching is unsatisfactory overall. This is because there are shortcomings in teachers' subject expertise and in their expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, many activities are too adult-directed and are not planned

effectively to promote specific skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject. Nevertheless, pupils enjoy their practical activities and try hard to complete their tasks successfully. This is seen in the care with which they work on their clay products.

87. The school is beginning to make use of national guidance in art and design. However, current planning is underdeveloped and does not ensure an appropriately balanced curriculum. This reflects the findings of the last inspection. As a result, pupils do not build effectively on their skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Sketchbooks have been introduced at the junior stage, and pupils have benefited from being able to work with an artist in residence, and from opportunities to enter competitions. Work in art and design is used to support learning in other subjects, particularly history, and to create attractive displays that enhance the school environment. However, the prime purpose of many tasks is to create an effect, rather than to encourage pupils to explore media and techniques to communicate their ideas. This emphasis limits pupils' opportunities to evaluate and improve their work to reflect their intended purpose and meaning. The co-ordinator has reviewed the subject and identified areas for development, but arrangements for monitoring planning and pupils' progress require improvement to promote higher standards.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

88. There has been insufficient improvement since the previous inspection. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is below the level expected, whereas previously it was described as broadly in line. The weakness of the limited development of design skills remains.
89. Insufficient evidence was available to make a secure judgement about pupils' progress and attainment, and the quality of teaching, in Years 1 and 2. By Year 6, pupils have made insufficient progress and attainment in all aspects of the subject is below that expected. On occasions, pupils' making skills are developed satisfactorily, as evident in the photographs of model suspension bridges built to carry a particular weight. In most cases, however, pupils follow a recipe of instructions, and do not produce their own detailed design brief. An interesting Year 5 task about making an artefact to hold a gluepot holder was of limited value because the design and materials to be used were prescribed. The finished products, although fulfilling their function, were of limited quality. Little evaluation by pupils was evident, although the teacher marked the products, and produced an appropriate evaluation of each holder. Designs of torches by Year 6 pupils do not include reference to either the materials used or estimated dimensions. The cats, with moving parts using split pins, produced in Year 4, were not challenging enough for this age of pupil. Insufficient opportunities are available for pupils to select from a range of materials when designing artefacts. Learning is unsatisfactory, although pupils concentrate well when engaged in DT related tasks.
90. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall, although in some individual lessons, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Its impact, however, is limited because there is not a clear understanding of the distinction between DT, art and design, and craft, which also appears on timetables. Insufficient attention is given to the development of basic skills, and to the design and evaluation processes. Often activities identified as DT are essentially art and design tasks. The majority of activities are linked to other subjects, especially history, with limited design opportunities. Although some assessment takes place, this is not consistent and does not accurately assess

pupils' skills. The organisation of the subject makes a limited contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, beyond that of sharing resources sensibly. There is little opportunity for independent work.

91. Links with literacy and numeracy are not satisfactory. Pupils rarely evaluate their work sufficiently, and estimating and measuring skills are not used enough because of excessive prescription. The co-ordinator has identified the need to develop the use of ICT to support DT. He has relevant subject expertise and a satisfactory understanding of the current weaknesses of the subject but has not brought about the necessary improvement.

GEOGRAPHY

92. Standards have not improved since the previous inspection and are below expectations at age seven and eleven. This is because curriculum planning lacks continuity in the progression of skills. Teaching in the few lessons seen was satisfactory because teachers have the skills to conduct a sound lesson. However, lack of progress overall is due to shortcomings in the planned curriculum.
93. Scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils shows that pupils have insufficient knowledge and limited skills in the subject. For example, Year 6 pupils are unclear what physical features are and have only sketchy knowledge about locations and how these might differ. Much of their understanding comes from videos and worksheets. Pupils' research skills are underdeveloped because insufficient use is made of the local environment, books and ICT. The school grounds provide a good opportunity for orienteering and this is well used. Pupils are able to find places using co-ordinates but do not know that the photocopied sheets they use are from an Ordnance Survey map and have only limited understanding about differences in scale.
94. The lesson that most clearly developed geographical skills was an orienteering photo trail. This task enabled Year 3 pupils to use a map to find their way around a familiar place. They learned the purpose of a compass, although were not yet experienced enough to use this successfully. Year 1 pupils drew a map following the progress of the hen in *Rosie's Walk* that reinforced their understanding of the language of position. The caretaker talked to Year 2 pupils about his job and this helped pupils to think about their own responsibilities for litter and waste. Although meaningful links are made with other subjects, tasks do not always focus sufficiently on the specific skills of geography. Thus, the impact of teaching is less successful than it could be in promoting learning. Insufficient use is made of work in geography to develop literacy and numeracy skills and, in some lessons, there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils.
95. The co-ordinator provides guidance for teachers and takes some responsibility for monitoring standards. However, this is within the limited framework of the present curriculum, which is underdeveloped.

HISTORY

96. There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection and standards are below expectations at ages seven and eleven. This is mainly due to insufficient guidance to ensure pupils build effectively on their skills, knowledge and understanding. Teaching within individual lessons is generally satisfactory but the

quality and quantity of work over time shows lack of depth, coherence and rigour. There is over-dependence on worksheets, too much reliance on broadcast programmes for younger pupils and lack of provision for research skills. Work is often unfinished and even older pupils spend a lot of time colouring in worksheets. There are few opportunities to develop literacy. An exception is pupils' writing from the point of view of a soldier following a visit to Boswell Field and this shows empathy and plenty of descriptive detail.

97. Year 2 pupils develop awareness of time but tasks are disjointed and not well planned to build on their own experiences. For example, pupils sequence pictures of male members of a family that bear little or no resemblance to their own lives. They begin to understand differences in the past and present by comparing seaside holidays in different eras.
98. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they have not developed sufficient knowledge and understanding or research skills to attain average standards. In Years 3, 4 and 5 they learn that historical data is transmitted through recorded words, pictures and artefacts. However, they have very little first hand experience of using these to find information due to the reliance on worksheets and photocopied texts rather than books and primary sources of evidence, including artefacts. There are examples of pupils accessing information from a website but they lack the necessary skills to do this effectively. In a Year 6 lesson pupils had a good experience in using old newspapers as a resource to find information about change. However, lack of research opportunities in previous years limited their ability to do this efficiently.
99. Teaching is satisfactory within the limited curriculum provided. Pupils are well managed and tasks are occasionally adapted to the needs of pupils to provide different levels of challenge. Knowledge is often expressed through the medium of art or linked with other subjects such as mathematics but this is sometimes at the expense of focused learning objectives for history. A teacher enlivened one lesson by dressing up as an Ancient Greek and had Greek food prepared for tasting. This brought the historical period to life for the pupils and engaged their interest and concentration. There are shortcomings in the guidance provided for teachers and the planning requires development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

100. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' attainment in Years 2 and 6 was below that expected for their age. There have been some important improvements in provision although these are not yet impacting on standards in Years 2 and 6. A training programme has resulted in most teachers having increased confidence in their abilities to teach the subject, although a few still make little use of ICT. A computer suite has been developed, which is used regularly by pupils from Year 1 onwards. Although not yet used to its full potential, an interactive whiteboard has been installed in the suite and Internet access is available. Despite the good progress, standards in ICT are currently below average in Year 6. Pupils' skills in Year 6 reflect the low standards in their previous work, rather than current weaknesses in provision.
101. Pupils do not have well-developed ICT skills when they start in Year 1. Although they have made satisfactory progress at the infant stage, standards by Year 2 are below those expected. Pupils have adequate word-processing skills, and are building up confidence when using computers. Pupils draw and paint pictures on screen using an appropriate program. Year 1 pupils know about some uses of ICT in the home,

such as in a washing machine, and also in supermarkets. Their mouse control skills are generally poor and this affects the quality of work on screen, such as when drawing the features of a pet. They correctly select features such as brush, pencil and eraser, and also change the colour they are using. Year 1 pupils do not yet have the ability to print their own work, or go through procedures such as saving or logging off independently. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 get limited experience in gathering and retrieving information from a range of sources.

102. The attainment of pupils by Year 6 is below that expected for their age. This is the result of pupils' low skills in using the keyboard and computer mouse. Pupils do not have extensive experience of word-processing or desktop publishing and, as a result, skills in these areas are unsatisfactory. However, progress is being made in these areas and standards are rising. Year 6 pupils have satisfactory skills in data handling and using the computer for research purposes. Pupils produced spreadsheets to enter data relating to the sightings of different birds and displayed the data in an appropriate graph. Year 4 pupils have suitable experience of word-processing, evident in some extensive text about the Battle of Bosworth. In a good Year 3 lesson, pupils' understanding of the keyboard was enhanced through using it to create a message in code, in particular in relation to the shift key and use of symbols.
103. Teaching is at least satisfactory through the school and often good for pupils from Year 3 onwards. Most teachers have the appropriate subject knowledge necessary to help pupils develop their ICT skills. At present, there are not enough computers in classrooms so that skills learnt in the suite cannot always be used again before the next lesson. Satisfactory use is made of computers in English, mathematics and for aspects of art and design. Currently the school does not have an adequate range of equipment to enable pupils to have experience using sensors in science to monitor changes in temperature and other conditions. Finance is now available to overcome this omission. In good Year 3 and 6 lessons, teachers were confident and gave pupils clear directions, with the result that pupils succeeded well, using the keyboard satisfactorily to construct a message and to enter data. An effective aspect of the teaching is that pupils are usually taught in relatively small groups, half a class at a time. This, together with some good additional adult support, helps all pupils to make satisfactory or, in the juniors, good progress.
104. The curriculum is based largely on a commercial scheme, which ensures adequate coverage of the subject. The current level of skills limits opportunities for ICT to make a major contribution to pupils' personal development, although increasing use of the Internet is beginning to overcome this. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has responded well to the need to improve provision. He has produced an effective action plan, which lists the needs and priorities for moving the subject forward further.

MUSIC

105. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment in Years 2 and 6 was above that expected nationally and their progress was good. The school has maintained this position, especially in singing. Limited evidence was available for other aspects of music. Pupils' singing is above the expected standard. They sing in tune, with good expression and clear diction. Older pupils sing well in four parts and are developing the correct use of musical terminology. They use simple notation well to record their compositions. Attitudes to music are usually very good. In lessons, whether in a single class or a large group, pupils usually show great enthusiasm and enjoyment,

evident in the happy faces of virtually all the pupils during hymn practice. Boys and girls are equally well involved, with many Year 5 and 6 boys joining in with great gusto.

106. The quality of teaching is good overall and helps to develop pupils' musical skills well. In lessons taken by the music co-ordinator, whether with large groups or with her own class, teaching is consistently very good. Excellent subject knowledge helps to ensure rapid progress in, for instance, the importance of breathing correctly to take account of the words being sung. Lessons taken by other members of staff are less successful. This can be due to insufficient time being available, as in a Year 6 lesson, or not using a tape to best effect and the inattention of pupils, as in a Year 1 lesson. In Year 4, pupils have good opportunities to develop different forms of four-beat rhythm when singing or using a range of instruments. This work was inspired after listening to Tudor music. In the lessons taken by the co-ordinator, pupils make very good progress, have fun and feel a sense of achievement because of excellent relationships, high expectations and clear guidance on how to improve. Progress in other lessons is not always satisfactory.
107. Planning for music is suitably detailed, although the co-ordinator is preparing to introduce new, improved guidance. The current provision is most effective when delivered by a music specialist. Taped sessions are not always used to best effect. Satisfactory assessment takes place by recording against National Curriculum levels. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Cultural development is promoted through listening to different styles of music, but the co-ordinator recognises that opportunities need to be extended for pupils to listen to and appraise music from a wider range of cultures. Pupils take part in productions, which gives them good opportunities to perform before an audience and contributes positively towards their social development. Extra-curricular activities and specialist music tuition make a positive contribution to the development of pupils' musical skills, and provide gifted musicians with opportunities to extend and use their talents. The co-ordinator leads the subject very well.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

108. A significant number of pupils start school with below average physical skills. As a result of good teaching and good opportunities to develop skills pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 2 pupils attain the standards expected for their age. Pupils continue to make good progress as a result of good and sometimes very good teaching, good opportunities in lessons and the excellent extra curricular opportunities offered within the school. By the end of Year 6 they attain good standards in all aspects of the subject including swimming.
109. During indoor lessons in movement, Year 2 pupils move with sound levels of control and co-ordination. In dance they use space well and effectively interpret the pitch and rhythm of music through movement. In dance and drama they work well in paired activity using large and small movements, gesture and facial expression to interpret emotions when creating their own movement sequences. They respond well to music, producing their own interesting interpretations when focusing on its mood and rhythm. Year 1 pupils work hard and apply themselves well in developing travelling skills as they work on the large apparatus. They display sound balancing, stretching and climbing skills. Pupils are effectively encouraged by teachers to work hard to improve the quality of their performance.

110. By Year 6, pupils display good games skills. During lessons they respond to good coaching from knowledgeable teachers in developing and refining skills of passing and dribbling a football. In games, these same pupils demonstrate good positional sense and the difficult ability of being effective 'off the ball'. Pupils are developing a good awareness of the importance of playing as a team when engaged in competitive team games. By the end of Year 6 almost all are able to swim twenty-five metres unaided. The school's own records show a significant number of pupils achieve national awards in personal survival, distance swimming and stroke technique. Overall standards in swimming are good.
111. The quality of teaching is good overall. Direct teaching and coaching of games skills is effective in improving ball skills. Teachers ensure that pupils warm up and cool down before and after sessions. During lessons pupils respond well to instructions and try hard to do their best, and this has a direct impact on their good learning. Pupils are encouraged to practise hard and to evaluate their own and the performance of others.
112. The indoor accommodation is spacious for dancing, movement and gymnastics. There is good hard-surfaced and grassed provision outside for games. Resources are good both in quality and quantity and these are used well by teachers. An impressive programme of extra-curricular provision very effectively enhances the good curriculum provision for both infant and junior pupils. These include football, netball, cross-country running, athletics, cricket and basketball. A significant number of staff contribute to this provision, giving up their time unsparingly, and coaching is also offered by visitors to school. Pupils enthusiastically support the after-school clubs. The school competes in a range of sports activities and team games against other schools and, as at the time of the last inspection, continues to enjoy considerable success.
113. The subject is very well managed by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. Good assessment and recording procedures keep the school well informed about individual pupil progress. PE continues to be a strength of the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

114. Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress with their learning. As a result, as they get older they show an increasing ability to express ideas and feelings and have greater knowledge and understanding of religious issues to aid their thinking and discussions. This represents improvement since the last inspection when standards throughout the school were unsatisfactory. Since then guidance on planning has been introduced which indicates to teachers what is to be taught. As the result of an effective programme of professional training, teachers are now more confident in teaching the subject. One area of concern at the time of the last report was the lack of a formal assessment procedure for the subject, and this still remains to be addressed.
115. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. Teachers involve pupils directly in lessons and, by the use of astute questions, challenge pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding. They encourage pupils to answer by drawing on their existing knowledge. Teachers make good use of a range of resources and this helps make lessons interesting. For example, in a Year 1 lesson about baptism the teacher used a good range of colourful photographs to promote pupils' understanding of its

significance and symbolism within the church. Teachers make lessons relevant to the lives of the pupils. Pupils respond enthusiastically, contributing well to discussion, displaying considerable interest in each other's questions and happily sharing knowledge with one another.

116. Year 2 pupils have sound knowledge about the way people of different faiths celebrate. For example, they know how Christians, Sikhs, Muslims and Buddhists celebrate the births of Jesus, Guru Nanak, Muhammad and Buddha respectively. When studying the celebration of Diwali, pupils are able to draw on knowledge of the part played by darkness and light in celebrations in a number of faiths and identify similarities and differences between them.
117. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound grasp of the importance of world religions and understand their significant symbols and events. They learn about the similarities and differences in the ways people of different faiths worship by studying the symbols used in worship and the buildings in which they meet to worship. Year 6 pupils effectively research Judaism using a range of sources including books, CD-Roms and the Internet.
118. Visitors to school and a small number of visits out of school make a sound contribution to pupils' learning. For example, some pupils have visited local Christian churches of different denominations. From time to time the local vicar visits school and participates in some lessons. A member of the Jewish faith has visited classrooms and talked to pupils about aspects of her faith.
119. Management is satisfactory. Resources are good and effective use is made of a range of artefacts when pupils study the different ways in which people worship. Assemblies contribute to the quality of learning by providing opportunities for prayer and reflection, extending knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and recognising the major festivals of other religions.